Shanghai Dec 16th 1850.

To the Soc of Inquiry
Princeton N.J.

Dear Brethren

A letter from one of your number (Mr Deering) was received last August. I write in reply in hopes that this may reach you before the close of your present Session & I write the more promptly because I am the only one at present of your number at this station. I hope however that Mr Culbertson of Ningpo will soon be here to take his place as delegate to the Com for the Translation of the O.T. into Chinese. It is now about 5 months since I reached this port & have been much of my time occupied in making arrangements for the establishment of a mission of our Board at this place. In this I was assisted at first by Mr Culbertson who left after a short time for Ningpo. Since then Mr Oliphant one of the Bp Com has been here partly on business & has rendered me not a little service & I hope will urge the necessity of a large reinforcement upon the attention of the Bp Com.

Mr Deering in his letter requested information on some points wh I will answer in order. 1st As to my progress in the language & my opinion with regard to its difficulties. Upon this point I am not so well qualified to give an opinion as some of my older brethren. In fact my own mind is not made up as to the nature of the difficulties to be contended with. I was only a year at Ningpo not long enough to become familiar with that dialect & have been only 5 months here. Those two dialects differ considerably so that a native of Shanghai would not be understood at Ningpo. There are however a great many Ningpo men here who gradually come to use the Shanghai dialect. This however is not often the case with those from the more Southern provinces. Their is so different that they generally retain it. In those dialects spoken at Fuhchau Amoy & Canton I believe it is the opinion of most of the missionaries that a system of intonation is necessary. You will see that system described in some articles of the Miss Herald particularly an article by Mr Pohlman in the No. for Feb. 49. In the Northern ports the tones are generally not considered to be of so much importance. There are some good speakers who have paid

attention to them & others equally as good who have not. My own impression is that in many words it is necessary to notice the tone or you will be more likely to confound it with others of similar sound & the same orthography. This however is not an insurmountable difficulty. It requires no musical ear though facility in distinguishing sounds is doubtless of advantage in this & other respects. A good method of training is to learn some spoken language where sounds differing from our native tongue become familiar. No missionary I think ever regretted the time spent in his younger days in learning languages. It will also enable one to overcome the difficulties besides those of strange sounds & that is of classification of words so as to retain them in the memory & also of becoming familiar with different idioms of speech. The idiom is perhaps one of the hardest things to master & can only be done by perseverance & long application. A cheerful temper with close observation of the natives when talking among themselves will enable most any man to get a tolerable acquaintance with the Chinese spoken language. The written language differs considerably from the spoken. It is more concise as a general thing & differs in idiom. There are also many sounds in the spoken which have no character to represent them in the written language.

It is true the differences in the written language from the concise & what is considered the high style of Confucius, to the diffuse style of his commentators & of more modern productions;- the differences also in the spoken from the written & from other dialects form no slight obstacle to the missionary & to the spread of the Gospel. Yet as it is a difficulty allowed by him who loves the cause of missions far better than we do & allowed for wise purposes, we ought willingly & cheerfully to go through the labor involved. And who that loves the cause of it is not willing to sharpen his intellect & with love faith & zeal persevere until he can declare the glad news of salvation to the multitudes of this heathen nation.

The 2d point on wh information was requested was some account of the Romish missionary stations in China. I shall not be able to give any complete or satisfactory information on this point. The number of Romish Priests from Europe who have entered China from this port I have heard

others estimate at 40.
estimated at over 100. They immediately put on disguise & very many of them go into the interior. This just is the centre of their operations for the North & North west of China. They are building here a very large Cathedral on land procured from Govt as indemnity for property confiscated at the time of the persecution against them 200 years ago. They also obtained several other valuable pieces of land in the same way. They have a college a short distance from the City & their converts are quite numerous through the province - said to number 50 or 80.000. From here the Priests penetrate into the interior as far as Pekin & Mongolia. Most of the Romanists among the Chinese are said to be descendants of families who professed that belief before the persecution. In one of the Southern provinces an Edict has been issued against Christianity on the occasion of a seizure of a French Priest who was afterwards liberated by the interference of the French Consul at Canton. I have a copy of the Edict wh I intend sending to the Mission Rooms. It is a curious document but not likely to have any permanent effect.

It is manifest from what little we know of the operations of the Romanists that they are active & zealous - many of the Priests from Europe suffering great privations & often exposed to great danger from violation of the treaty lately against the admission of foreigners into the interior. I cannot say whether or not their converts are multiplying to any great extent. Neither am I informed as to their mode of conducting operations - some of their converts who have come in contact with the missionaries appear to be quite well instructed - though with most this is not the case. They allow also of many practices among their converts wh show that many of them are more Heathen than Christian.

A 3rd point upon wh I was requested to write was the number of Labourers now wanted in my immediate vicinity. My answer is at least 5 more for the mission of our Board at this station & that as soon as possible. This may seem a large number & I will therefore give some of my reasons. The whole number of male missionaries permanently located here numbers at present 16. The Southern Baptists are expecting 3 more soon wh will increase it to 21. These are all employed in the Northern half of the City. There is not a single Chapel in the Southern half. Besides the population in the City there are a large

number of cities & villages within a days journey & wh are accessible according to the provisions of the present treaty. Yet there is only one single outstation among them all. Gradually a still wider door will open around us into wh from this as a centre we wish to penetrate. The Romanists have already made this the center of operations for the interior & from its commercial advantages must eventually occupy the same position for Protestant missions. The foreign population is rapidly increasing here & in the harbors are ships from every part of the Globe. As an important commercial place it draws from all parts of China men of various classes who according to the predominance & influence of religion here will make it known in various parts of the Empire. We moreover wish one of these days to act on the aggressive. If not permitted to do so to any great extent ourselves, yet we wish to send forth colporteurs & evangelists who may proclaim to their own countrymen the way of life. To this last mode of operation special attention must necessarily be paid. In such an Empire & with such a language, as the work advances, we cannot depend even if it were desirable upon reinforcements from Christian lands. We must seek to raise up a christian ministry here. And in order to do this together with other departments of missionary labor a strong missionary force is needed at each station. They have 8 male missionaries at Ningpo & it is with the greatest reluctance that they can spare one man to come here on the important labor of translating the Scriptures into Chinese. In carrying on our efforts for the evangelization of the world we should go not on the principle of sending the smallest possible number, but show our zeal & forwardness by offering freely & willingly to the work of the Lord. Let me mention some of the departments of labor wh need to be carried on at each station 1st Preaching wh can be done to an unlimited extent in chapels rented or built, in public places of resort in the temples & by the wayside in villages & cities in all directions. 2. Pastoral visitation or going from house to house & the people are always glad to see you & talking with them familiarly & inviting them to the house of God. Companies of women can often be gathered in this manner who would never come out to the public preaching of the word. 3. Day schools taught by native teachers

where our doctrines can be taught & be under our superintendence. Where
we can be sustained at a very small expense afford a small congregation
we can be regularly instructed & we in time & under a more complete system
may become primary schools to prepare for the more advanced schools.
4th Boarding schools for both sexes we in the different departments & in this strange
language need some division of labor to be carried on with any efficiency. It must
be recollected that this includes a system we should strive as far as human
instrumentality goes to qualify men who shall be able to teach others also & who
is included in 2 or 3 courses & under various instructors at home.
5th The preparation of books both religious & for text books. This demand must be
supplied by missionaries until they can train up Chinese who shall be better
able to do it. From this brief summary of what is to be done I hope you
will agree with me in saying at least 5 more for this station & that as
soon as possible. There ought also to be considered the contingencies that are
liable to occur such as removal on account of ill health or by death, or
on account of the time consumed in obtaining reinforcements & in learning
the language, often in small missions leave important operations entirely
suspended. Now here is work - work in abundance to be done, who is
willing to come & assist in doing it. Here is a nation with its hundreds
of millions to be instructed in the Knowledge of the Lord & who among
you is willing to come & labor & toil for the promotion of this glorious
end! It will require faith, strong reliance upon the arm of God, to
sustain amid great discouragements & a love for souls that will make
many a wearisome duty seem light. And may he who is the Lord of the
harvest qualify & send forth many a laborer into this great harvest field.

There was one other point upon which I was requested to
write & that is what special precautions are necessary to insure good
health. It is difficult to say beforehand what effect this climate would
have on particular individuals. Some enjoy better health here than they
would at home. This has been the case thus far with myself. Others & perhaps
those you would think the best able to bear a foreign clime sink under disease.

Some suffer on their first arrivals from fevers & ague. Others escape for several years & some entirely. The only other disease that we are more exposed to than at home is ophthalmia. This is generally an inflammation of the eyelid which with care passes off soon in most cases. The climate here is favorable on account of the coldness of the winter. From November to March we generally have Northerly winds which make warm woolen clothing & fires very comfortable. In the Spring at the change of the Monsoon the air is very damp & usually a great deal of rain. The extreme hot weather seldom continues more than 6 weeks or two months & the heat is greatly moderated by a strong southerly breeze. There is one other danger to which past experience shows our lives are somewhat exposed to. & that is the danger of violent death by the hands of pirates. A melancholy instance of this has recently occurred in the case of Mr Fast a Swedish missionary at Tuk chan, who having purchased land for a chapel went to the North of the River to get a draft signed at the Opium station & on his way back was met by pirates & murdered. A fellow missionary escaped wounded. In the interior by canals &c there is probably little danger of this kind. The Chinese of all nations are the least disposed to bloodshed & it is only when avarice & starvation drive them, that they resort to desperate measures for subsistence. Robbery among themselves is generally a very bloodless affair; the weaker party if they cannot escape generally submit quietly to have every thing taken without resistance.

We are thankful however that so little real peril attends the work of missions in this land. We are in fact surrounded with most of the comforts & helpings which we were wont to enjoy in our native land. And even our native land is brought near by constant communication & may in a few years be made brought much nearer.

God has moreover in his Providence opened a wide door of entrance into this empire & by that act calls upon his people to come up & possess the land in his name. Better by far for China that this door had never been opened if the church neglects her duty. Already have men come from these lands bringing the most fascinating of all persons &

its deadly influence is widely extending. Already are there more than 30 ships anchored at different points on the coast dealing out this drug while others are constantly going back & forth keeping up the supply. The capital of the wealthiest merchants carries this trade forward. It exceeds in value all other imports & regulates almost entirely the price of exchange. Perhaps no means could have been so admirably devised by the great arch enemy for the hindrance of the gospel among this people as this opium trade. It drains the country of its specie & gives in exchange poverty & death. It quickly undermines the constitution & obtains a most complete ascendency over the appetite so that once ensnared its victim is well nigh lost. How shall we put a stop to the progress of this traffic! When the enemy is coming in thus like a flood, where are the standard bearers to lift up the standard of the Lord against it. Where is the zeal for the Lord of hosts that shall more than counterbalance this love of gain? That shall send forth its thousand messengers to plant the gospel in the hearts of this people, before the love of opium has taken root & carried its victims beyond the reach of warning?

My dear christian brethren as you love the cause of God & the honor of his name, remember a nation composing one third of our race & inquire what obligations you personally owe to God on their behalf. I will not say it is your duty to labor in China, that question belongs to you to decide honestly before God. My only wish is that it may be done honestly. If God calls, go labor faithfully among your own countrymen & it may not be long before from its Western as well as from its Eastern shores missionaries shall go forth to heathen lands. If God calls to labor here, be not disobedient & you shall find his presence with you, which will more than make up for the dangers of the way & for all our small sacrifices in his behalf.

I shall be glad to hear from you from time to time & to answer such enquiries as you may make so far as I can. There are one or two items of news wh I will refer to as you may not see them elsewhere. An excursion has recently been undertaken by some educated Chinese at the request of Dr Medhurst to make some inquiries about the Jews supposed to be residing some distance in the interior. Dr M does not anticipate much from the investigation though some curious knowledge may be brought to light. The men sent have not yet returned.

Mr Smith on his visit to the different ports called on his way here at the Loo Choo Islands a group South of the Japanese. Dr Bettelheim with his wife & family have been residing there for a year or two trying to preach the Gospel but without success as yet. Dr B is kept in a temple off on a promontory & all his movements watched by soldiers. When he goes into the city & attempts to preach, the people being afraid of the Govt immediately flee. His servants are changed every ten days & he is allowed only a very short allowance of provisions supplied by Govt who will allow no one to take any money from him. The Govt are influenced by fear of the Japanese & entreat most earnestly that he should be taken away. They promised however to treat him better for the future. Dr B. is engaged in translating the N.T. into Japanese & also preparing a Dictionary of Japanese as he supposes, he having good evidence as he thinks that the language spoken on the Islands is Japanese. Should he not be treated better he will probably be removed & if he should another Labour will be sent to assist him.

In conclusion I have only to assure you dear Brethren of my constant interest in you & in the Society with which you are connected. May God continue to bless you as in times past with faithful instructors & may you go forth to the work to which you are called thoroughly furnished & sincerely devoted to your Masters service.

Believe me as Ever your brother in Christ

W. H. Wyatt